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Senate

The Senate met at 9:30 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable ELIZABETH WARREN, a Senator from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Eternal God, who rules over the waters, hear our cry for help. Lord, protect and defend this land we love. Guide our Nation through the night with Your light from above, using our lawmakers to do Your work on Earth. Lord, stand close to our Senators. Be their shepherd in these challenging times. Give them strength for life's marathon, as You bless them with Your peace.

Mighty God, we will not be defeated, because we place our hope in You.

We pray in Your powerful Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Presiding Officer led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. LEAHY).

The legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, September 29, 2021.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable ELIZABETH WARREN, a Senator from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, to perform the duties of the Chair.

PATRICK J. LEAHY,
President pro tempore.

Ms. WARREN thereupon assumed the Chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

EXTENDING GOVERNMENT FUNDING AND EXTENDING EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE ACT

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, on the CR, the Senate could take action as early as today to address a concern that demands the immediate attention of this Chamber: funding the Federal Government beyond September 30.

To prevent a government shutdown, Senate Democrats will be introducing a continuing resolution that keeps the government open until early December, while also providing long-sought emergency funding to help Americans still reeling from natural disasters from this summer, as well as funding to help resettle Afghan refugees. We can approve this measure quickly and send it to the House so it can reach the President's desk before funding expires midnight tomorrow. With so many critical issues to address, the last thing the American people need right now is a government shutdown. This proposal will prevent one from happening.

I want to thank my colleagues who are working quickly to prepare this legislation.

DEBT LIMIT

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, now on debt limit, of course, once we

fund the government, we still need to address the urgent matter of extending the debt ceiling and preserving the full faith and credit of the United States.

To paraphrase the economist Austan Goolsbee, who just met with our caucus this morning, throughout history, there have certainly been governments that have defaulted on their debt, but never has there been a default caused by pure stupidity—in this case, Republican stupidity.

Well, Democrats are working to prevent such an outcome from happening now. Over the past week, our caucus has tried to find a workable solution to avoid default on our sovereign debt, but the Republicans have stymied us at every opportunity.

On Monday, we considered a continuing resolution which, among other things, would have extended the debt ceiling until the end of 2022, allowing us to pay for the debt incurred by the previous administration. Republicans unanimously voted in favor of default.

So, on Tuesday, we gave Republicans another chance. We offered to solve the debt ceiling impasse by doing exactly what Republicans claimed they wanted all along: Raise it with only Democratic votes. We gave them a chance to oppose it, like they said they would, and allow Democrats to solve this problem ourselves. Again, it was precisely what they asked for. And Leader MCCONNELL cited this precedent several times in the last few days as to how to get out of the debt crisis. But once again, Republicans blocked that proposal in favor of default, and, quite frankly, no Republican provided a good answer as to why. When Leader MCCONNELL came out to rebut, he didn't discuss the merits of our proposal. He said: We don't want Democrats going forward and doing other things.

Well, this is about debt that we have already incurred, debts from the past, spending from the past. It is not about the future.

If we never did debt ceiling—if we always let the debt ceiling lapse because

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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